
CHAPTER 27: Powered Industrial Trucks

Powered industrial trucks are used throughout the printing industry. Their primary usage allows a variety of tasks associated with material handling to be performed quickly, efficiently, and economically. The hazards commonly associated with powered industrial trucks will vary depending on the type of operations and how the operator drives the vehicle. Among these hazards are:



- Falling loads caused by overloading or unbalanced loading;
- Operator has an obstructed view in the direction of travel; and
- The vehicle is being operated at an excessive rate of speed.

There are other hazards related to the use of powered industrial trucks that are caused or enhanced by the characteristics of the work place. These hazards include the following:

- Operating in areas where there are narrow aisles;
- Operating where there are employees working in or adjacent to the path of travel of the powered industrial truck;
- Loading or unloading trailers and failing to assure that the trailer floor will support the imposed load; and
- Failure to assure the wheels are properly blocked with wheel chocks.

Due to the heavy volume of pallet jacks (powered and nonpowered), it is important to alert operators that this equipment may be dangerous and must be used at all times. Permits are “optional,” but training must be given in order to assure the operators know how to use the equipment.

The safe and proper handling of powered industrial trucks is of prime importance to all. The ***MIOSHA General Industry Safety Standard – Part 21, Powered Industrial Trucks***

establishes both employer and employee responsibilities. Training materials, sample operator permits and other safety information can be obtained from the Consultation, Education and Training Division of Consumer and Industry Services.

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- 27.1 Employer Responsibility
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Training materials; sample operator permits; and other safety information, such as the “*Powered Industrial Truck Operator’s Manual*” (CET #0116), can be obtained from the Consultation, Education and Training Division of the Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services. Call 517-322-1809.



27.1 Employer Responsibility

Only authorized personnel are allowed to operate a powered industrial truck. You must provide training prior to the employee’s assignment as an operator and test the potential operator on:

- Operating ability;
- Knowledge of the equipment;
- Knowledge of **Part 21** rules **R408.12171** to **R408.12193**; and
- Knowledge of daily checks.

As the employer, you must initiate a performance test to determine whether the employee can operate the assigned truck through the functions necessary to perform the required work.

27.2 Employee Responsibility

An operator shall safeguard other employees at all times. If at any time a powered industrial truck is found to be in need of repair, defective, or in any way unsafe, the truck must be taken out of service until it has been restored to a safe operating condition. All repairs must be made by authorized personnel.